

JUVENILE ACCOUNTABILITY BLOCK GRANTS PROGRAM

The Juvenile Accountability Block Grants Program (JABG) provides funds to states and units of local government to enhance their efforts to combat serious and violent juvenile crime through accountability-based reforms. Accountability in juvenile justice means assuring that, as a result of their wrongdoing, juvenile offenders face consequences that make them aware of and answerable for the loss, damage, or injury perpetrated upon the victim.

Originally established in 1998, the program was renamed (it was formerly called the Juvenile Accountability Incentive Block Grants program), revised and placed under Title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 2002. At the federal level, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention administers the JABG program.

JABG grants are awarded to the states, which in turn are required to pass through a majority of the funding (75 percent) to eligible units of local government. Each state receives a base amount of 0.5 percent of the federal funds available, with the remainder of the funds divided among the states based on their under 18 population.

Funding amounts for units of local government are based on a formula that takes into account local criminal justice expenditures and the level of violent crime. Beginning in 2005, the minimum amount for a sub-grant is \$10,000; the previous threshold was \$5,000. If an allocation for a unit of local government is less than \$10,000, the amount is retained by the state and must be expended to provide specified services to local governments. In 2005, California's JABG award of approximately \$4.3 million resulted in 38 sub-grants; the grant period for these funds is July 1, 2005 through June 30, 2006. Probation departments have implemented the majority of projects supported by these sub-grants. California has been notified that it will receive approximately \$4.3 million in JABG funds for 2006.

To encourage communities to maximize resources, grantees are required to form a local advisory board that is responsible for developing a Coordinated Enforcement Plan for reducing juvenile crime. This board must include representatives from the police, sheriff, prosecutor, probation, juvenile court, schools and business; the board may also include religious, fraternal, nonprofit, or social services organizations involved in crime prevention. Applicants must agree to provide cash match in the amount of 10 percent of the total funds to be expended; if the application is related to construction of corrections facilities, a 50 percent match is required.

Funds awarded in this non-competitive process must be expended in one or more of 16 federally designated program purpose areas – e.g., developing, implementing and administering graduated sanctions for juvenile offenders; establishing drug court programs, restorative justice programs, and/or accountability-based programs to improve school safety; implementing programs to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of juvenile courts and probation officers in reducing recidivism. The state and its sub-grantees must report annually on specified performance measures for the JABG program purpose areas.